

Anyuon Chan

Age: 22

Region: Bahr al Ghazal

I was born outside of Wau, in the district of Gogrial. My family members are farmers and my father was the chief of my village. My mom, brothers, sisters, uncle, and aunts are still in Sudan but I haven't seen them since 1989.

I left my village in 1989. I ran away in the middle of the night. Everyone in my family ran in different directions and I couldn't find them. I traveled with an elder person. He took care of me and sometimes carried me. We walked barefoot. It was a long, long walk and my feet hurt. We walked and walked. It was exhausting. There was never enough water. My elder and I walked until we reached Dimma, in Ethiopia. In Dimma, they reorganized the minors together and I met my nephew, Majok Myang. I was little, everything was so hard for me. When you are a child on your own, it is hard. I was just trying to survive.

In 1991, we went back to Sudan. I evacuated Ethiopia with my nephew before the war broke out. I stayed in Sudan at least two years before I went by car to Kakuma. The school in Kakuma was a different system than in Dimma and it was better. I was in debate and drama class and I was in the choir in the church. I taught math, science, and agriculture to children in class one to seven.

I came to the U.S. on November 28th, 2000. I flew from Kakuma to the Netherlands and then to New York, Utah, and Phoenix. I was thinking that I'm going to a better place and might find what I need.

In Sudan, you are expected to help your extended family. My family in Sudan expects me to help them. If I can't help them, they don't believe that I want to help them. I want to be able to help my family in Sudan.

I graduated from Paradise valley High School and now I am at Paradise Valley Community College. I want to be a pharmacist, but it is a lot of school. I only have to finish the science classes before I can apply to Pharmacy School, but I can't take them with the job I have. If I can't become a pharmacist, I may work as a computer systems engineer. I am a part-time cashier in Fry's Marketplace.

My intention if I get a pharmacy degree is that I can go back to Sudan to help people. No one in Sudan or Kakuma has the training to help people who need prescriptions. The people in Kakuma survive because God helps them.